795 of the Lithuanian survivors. *Lithuania is still "the most loyal Daughter of Rome in the North of Europe,"* in the words of the late Pope Pius XI.

661 798 The Russians continue their practice of subjecting the Catholic clergy to periodic and systematic "questioning," accompanied by physical torture and threats. Several priests became apostates. Most of the others were killed in torture chambers or exiled to Siberia, while several dozen priests enlisted with the patriotic guerrillas. Retired emiriti priests were called back to duty—as each priest must now serve 3 to 5 parishes.

874 661 798 One seminary remained for a few years. The number of divinity students was limited to 150. Professors and students were repeatedly summoned to the MVD-MGB and subjected to "pressure" and tortures in order to enlist them as agent-informers. Seminary rectors and their assistants were arrested and exiled as soon as they assumed duties. Students attended classes in churches. They were shadowed and threatened, and their number steadily dwindled as the MVD exercised more "pressure." By 1947, the number of divinity students dropped to 60. Normally 30 to 40 priests die annually of natural causes, but only 7-8 priests were graduated annually to replace the deceased. Finally, during the winter of 1947-48, the seminary was closed.

798 659 661 The surviving priests (about 400 as of the fall of 1948) could discourse on Scriptural texts in their sermons—always mindful that MVD agents were taking down notes and that suspicious Russians in the MVD-MGB offices would summon them to enlarge on translations of the suspect imputed allegories. Attacks on the Church in the official press, over the radio and at mass meetings cannot be answered or discussed: that would be "propaganda." The Stalin constitution warrants freedom of the anti-religious propaganda and of "religious belief,"—not of religious "propaganda."

Priests are continually exposed to provocation. For instance, MVD agents go to "confession" in order to provoke some remark by the priest. Sometimes a priest is summoned "to give last rites to a dying person." When the priest arrives, the "dying person" impersonated by a provocateur becomes a "guerrilla" ("bandit") and the clergyman is arrested "for association with bandits." Priests are forced to disrobe in MVD offices and to be photographed with MVD "girls." Afterward the photographs are circulated among the people. Nevertheless, the faithful are not easily misled by the alien oppressor whom every Lithuanian despises.

In 1947 there was a large scale massacre of the faithful at Kretinga when someone rang the bells of the Franciscan monastery at the time the Russians came to close it. The running people saw Russian troops bringing out the bleeding bayoneted body of a priest. Infuriated, the Lithuanians attacked the Russians with stones and bats. The Russians fired indiscriminately at the mob. . . .

No religious literature—no catechisms, missals, discourses, etc.—is printed: no paper is allotted by the government—and all printing places are state-operated. No priests are permitted to enter hospitals, schools, barracks and prisons to administer the sacraments. The priests enter gaols only as prisoners.

Since 1947, the Russians attacked the Church from another angle—clamoring against the Vatican and demanding creation of a "national Catholic Church."

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661 Priests were repeatedly summoned and urged to break with "the fascist Vatican"—or be imprisoned for "espionage" and contact with "the Vatican intelligence." In several parishes pastors were arrested and apostate priests installed, without the Bishop's blessing. Bishop's representatives were barred. Local communist officials became ardent and regular "church-goers"—but no one else went there and the Russian venture died a natural death.

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794 Finally, the Soviet authorities engaged in what may be *the final duel* between the Church and the militant atheism: decrees were published placing all "cultural monuments," viz. church structures, under the supervision of the government. The authorities attempt to impose the so-called *"dvadsatkas"*—committees of 20 members—on each parish to supervise the needs for repairs, pastor's functions, etc. One half of these committeemen are appointed by the government. As to the rest—no specific regulations are disclosed. These "committees" would have the power to dismiss pastors and accept replacements—in effect, they would nullify the episcopal authority and would control every activity of the faithful. To further weaken the opposition, the Bishops were seized and incoming administrators subjected to pressure and deprived of the means of communicatnig with the parishes.

The faithful realize the objective—the clandestine press forewarned them and coupled threats of reprisals against weakening persons together with the explanation of the real meaning of the Russian action. Under such strained conditions, churches go unrepaired rather than enjoy "government assistance" in exchange for acceptance of a *"dvadsatka."* Priests summoned before the MVD refer the officials to the Canonic Law of the Church and direct the Russians to discuss the matter with the Bishops.

A native traitor and atheist, Gailevičius, a former superintendent of NKVD prisons, is presently the "Commissar for Cult Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR." In January 1949 he published a decree in his capacity as custodian of "cultural monuments": churches must not "operate" within 7 kilometers of each other, and if several churches are found within the 7 km. radius, only one church is to be left "operating" and the other churches are to be shut down for use by the state.

In theory, this decree could scarcely affect rural churches. An intolerable situation is arising in cities, however. For instance, there are 17 churches and several chapels in the city of Kaunas. Under this decree, only one church would remain in this city of 150,000 inhabitants, of whom 60% are Lithuanian Catholics. A similar situation is bound to arise in the capital city of Vilnius with its dozens of beautiful churches, or "cultural monuments."

Serious clashes, or rather massacres of women and children, are expected to result during the forcible seizure and closing of the churches to which the foreign invader has no title.

The Italian press recently cited "reliable sources" of January 1949 to the effect that the Russians had confiscated the Cathedral Basilica of Vilnius and converted the edifice into a dance hall. This cannot be verified from Lithuanian sources at this time—but the Gailevičius decree makes this news probable.

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Lithuanian Freedom Fighters resting after a hard-fought battle—in Samogitia.

Religious Practices

798 659 Since the fall of 1947, the Russians abandoned tolerance of the strictly religious functions of the faithful—adults attending church and receiving sacraments. The radio, press and tens of thousands of professional agitators are engaged in blasphemous atheistic propaganda aimed at discrediting the religion as "outdated witchcraft and prejudice" and attributing "fascist conspiracy" to the Vatican. This meant that the first attempt to create a "national Church" by subverting clergy and imposing "dvadsatkas" failed. But the effort was not abandoned.

Vatican, British and American broadcasts are heard —and the more important developments are relayed to the population by the clandestine press. Needless to say that the Lithuanians, facing daily the official attack on their Church and their Catholicism, are very saddened and embittered by the complete silence abroad over the martyrdom of Lithuania—compared with the publicity given the staged trials of various Church dignitaries in the satellite countries. They especially resent the omission of Lithuania from among the Catholic nations listed in foreign broadcasts as victimized by Soviet armed atheism.

All monasteries are shut down and friars-nuns dispersed. Catechetic instruction is banned from schools, the armed forces and from private tutoring within a family circle. In 1946 the Bishops had requested the authorities to permit catechetic instruction of school-age children in church structures but the authorities refused. The parents themselves presently prepare their children for the first communion.

[626] Church-goers are watched by MVD agents conspicuously posted near church doorways, and they are shadowed and questioned. Arrests were repeatedly made inside churches by armed cap-wearing MVD gangsters who loudly profane the churches. All state employees—and all people are state employees with the exception of the "kulaks" or independent smallholders refusing to go into "artels"—receive strict warnings to stop attending religious services ("witchcraft sessions"), or their conduct will be construed as a "demonstration of disloyalty to the existing order."

Students developed a spontaneous custom: on the way to schools they stop in a church to pray. The authorities strive to eradicate this custom by summoning their parents and threatening to expel children from

659 798 schools. Teachers who openly attended churches were summarily dismissed.

[711] In spite of all these restrictions and threats, churches are well attended, especially in rural areas. Churchgoers are mostly women and people not connected with government offices and concerns, less dependent on the bureaucracy. Intellectuals and officials travel to distant places where they are not known personally to attend Mass or for confession. Rural churches, further from cities or where only small MGB-MVD garrisons are stationed, draw the largest attendance.

Religious processions on streets were not banned officially but few people dared to show themselves publicly and face the jeers of the armed blaspheming Russians and a few native traitors. The clergy discouraged public processions exposing the faithful to unnecessary persecution.

[585] Marriages are registered by local Executive Committees. Those who so desire may go through a religious ceremony but a religious ceremony is not recognized by the authorities. Marriages contracted prior to the Russian invasion were not questioned, however.

Several small Protestant congregations are still in existence in the Klaipėda District, but most of the Protestant churches were shut down and converted to other use for lack of communicants. The Calvinist churches of Biržai and Prienai were turned into military horse stables. Protestants are more or less tolerated, because the Protestant Church offers no problem to the occupant.

The pre-war Russian settlers, natives of Lithuania, regularly attend the MVD-dominated Orthodox churches. The new settlers go to churches occasionally out of curiosity.

Since the end of 1947, persons exhibiting religious icons and crucifixes in their homes came under persecution. Religious pictures and statuettes found in homes by the armed searching parties infuriate the Russians and their stooges. Religious objects are smashed, bayoneted, spat upon and trampled by the puny "masters of the world" raging against their Creator.

[65] Living quarters of the pastors—"cult servants"—were requisitioned by the housing authorities and a small nook was assigned to priests. Churches are assessed with exorbitant taxes. Complaints are answered: "If you can't meet state obligations—close up shop." The faithful exerted every effort to contribute the necessary funds and in most cases the tax levies were met. Thereupon the Russians demanded lists of contributors. The pastors answered that they did not list plate contributors—and were arrested and threatened with prosecution for "failure to account from public funds." A number of churches were unable to meet the levies, as all of the people are burdened with excessive taxes, requisitions and perennial "voluntarily assumed contributions to the state" imposed by the armed militiamen.

000 It is not known whether, since comrade Gailevičius claimed all churches as "cultural monuments" subject to his custody, churches would be taxed—that is, churches left "operating."

A church is the only place where a tortured people could find spiritual solace and escape from the blaring loudspeakers and mad ravings of the Russian oppressor.

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The Situation Of The Church In Enslaved Lithuania

Moscow Boasts

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The Information Bulletin of the Soviet Embassy in Washington (April 30), in its "Notes on Soviet Life," describes the alleged freedom of religion in Lithuania:

> The position of the Roman Catholic Church in Soviet Lithuania was described in a recent statement by the Most Reverend Mgr. Reinis, Catholic Archbishop of Vilnius.
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> "The Catholic Church enjoys perfect freedom in Soviet Lithuania," he told a Tass correspondent. "The local authorities are assisting us in restoring and repairing churches destroyed by the German invaders, and supplying building materials. Our clergy are provided with all necessities.
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> "There are at present two archbishoprics in Lithuania," Mgr. Reinis went on to explain, "those of Vilnius and Kaunas. The Catholic Church organization has remained unchanged. All 711 churches are functioning with their staffs of 1,332 clergy. The Kaunas Ecclesiastical Seminary, headed by the prominent theologian Ventskus, is graduating scores of young Catholic priests annually. Thousands of believers in Vilnius, Kaunas and other towns and villages gather as usual at Matins and Vespers. All established holidays are observed by the Church."

The Reality

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Before the Russian aggression in 1940, there were 6 dioceses in Lithuania (Archbishoprics of Vilnius and Kaunas, Bishoprics of Kaišiadorys, Panevėžys, Telšiai and Vilkavišk is) and the Klaipėda-Memel Prelacy. Lithuania had three archbishops and seven bishops, including one for the armed forces. There were four theological seminaries (Vilnius, Kaunas, Telšiai and Vilkavišk is) with 850 divinity students. There were Catholic and Protestant Theology-Philosophy Faculties in the Kaunas University, and a goodly number of private denominational high schools and other institutions of learning. A Catholic Academy of Arts and Sciences functioned and a Catholic University was in the process of formation. There were 800 parishes, with about 900 churches and chapels, 1,600 priests, and numerous convents, monasteries and congregations.

000 AND NOW? . . .

The Soviet Bulletin gives the latest statistics: "The Catholic Church organization has remained unchanged . . . 711 churches . . . 1,332 clergy . . . The Kaunas Ecclesiastical Seminary . . . two archbishoprics."

The Soviet Embassy conveniently omits the information regarding the fate of the bishops (of whom only three are probably in the country), the three missing seminaries, 300 priests, and the introduction of *numerus clausus* for divinity students: 150 for a nation of three million. . . The following article by a prominent Catholic layman, a university professor who lived through both Russian occupations and is now a refugee in Germany, will demonstrate bolshevik

[423] sess and personal property owned by institutions and organizations of a religious character were sequestered. In nationalizing land, parishes were given only 3 hectares—although other landlords retained 30 hectares. Buildings owned by parishes and bishoprics, including episcopal residences and seminaries, libraries, printing shops, printed stocks of books were confiscated. Denominational grammar schools, high schools, orphanages, kindergartens and hospitals were converted into state institutions. The stocks of missals, hymnals, prayer-books, rosaries, religious pictures, and other religious articles found stored in book shops and retail stores were desecrated or destroyed.

The Soviets considered the clergy a separate "caste," antagonistic to the proletariat and, therefore, to be eliminated. The clergy as well as independent farmers (called *'kulaks'*), were oppressed economically; priests and "cult servants" were heavily taxed. For instance, a tolerated "proletarian" with a monthly income of 200 rubles paid 30 rubles monthly for living space assigned to him, while "cult servants" of the same income class paid 220 rubles monthly, and those with incomes of 350 rubles paid 388 rubles.

The Communist Party proposed to levy excessive license fees on churches, similar to motion picture house and cabaret assessments. The taxes depended on the size of the church. Such taxes were already imposed in the sections of Poland annexed to Russia—20,000 to 50,000 rubles. A commissar explained the policy to a pastor of a Lithuanian parish in eastern Lithuania which was annexed by Russia in 1939: "If you can't pay—close down your shop." Consequently, the churches were to be closed by degrees for nonpayment of taxes.

The Party also passed a decision to convert the centrally located Garrison Church of Kaunas into a "Revolutionary Museum." The Museum of Church Art was liquidated and its exhibits, the antique vestments, were used by Red Army troopers to polish their boots.

All that was public anti-religious action. The other phase, shrouded in secrecy, was directed against individual members of the clergy.

The Party instructed its agents to disrupt the internal discipline of churchmen, to enlist agent-informers among the clergymen, to antagonize priests against each other or to compromise them. NKGB Major Gladkov issued a secret directive dated 21 October 1940, directed to all county security chiefs, to institute unbroken surveillance of priests, church employees, friars and nuns, and to enlist students of upper classes for espionage on the private lives of the clergymen. "Remember that some of the priests are not provided for materially and are wavering in their ideological outlook." The secret order of 21 January 1941 directed particular attention to individual discontent and antagonism among members of religious organizations: advantage should be taken of such incidents to disrupt the organizations.

After digesting the reports of weakness exhibited by some individual priests, People's Commissar of Justice, Pranas Pakarklis, a native traitor, offered attractive offices to a number of priests, on condition that

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793 659 661 they discontinue holding Mass and stop the performance of other priestly duties. A number of priests were arrested and the NKVD attempted to enlist their services by threats and blackmail. Because of these methods, several priests consented—and, immediately after their release, fled abroad. Those refusing to become agents were imprisoned. Soon the number of prisoners grew as many friars, preachers and high school students heroically defended their faith.

626 527 461 The Russians initiated a campaign against religious *traditions*. They began by banning the traditional Corpus Christi processions in the streets. All Saints Day was declared to be a working day, and the authorities banned traditional services and mass visits to cemeteries on All Souls' Day. During Advent and Lent, the bolsheviks encouraged dancing, entertainment and anti-religious lectures. Good Friday and Holy Saturday, as well as the second day of Easter, were designated working days. Those failing to report for work on the second day of Easter were prosecuted. In general, at frequent intervals, ordinary Sundays were periodically declared to be working days, and Saturdays—days of rest.

876 626 The teaching of religion in schools was replaced by classes on biology and the Stalin constitution. Biological lectures popularized "Darwinism." The "science of constitution" was to popularize a "Soviet democracy" and its oft-varying shifts directed by party line. In place of religious sodalities and athletic groups, the bolsheviks attempted to form "*Komsomol*" (Communist Youth) nests directed by political instructors called "Komsorg." Religious sermons were replaced by anti-religious tirades in the communist-controlled press and at mass meetings. Attendance at such mass-meetings to hear blasphemies was made compulsory.

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626 661 558 Churches kept open and functioning. However, attendants at religious services were terrorized. The Party posted uniformed and non-uniformed spies at church doors to observe and list the churchgoers. Attendance in church was a sufficient reason for dismissal from higher offices.

000 The anti-religious drive, growing in tempo, began to expand. When Bishops Brizgys and Ramanauskas called on Pozdniakov, the former Soviet Minister to Lithuania and at present the Kremlin's deputy satrap, to ask for the return of the premises of the Theological Seminary, the Russian attempted to "reason" with them. Pozdniakov stated that they should have no illusions: what had been accomplished in Russia in 20 years, will be achieved in Lithuania within two to three years by experienced administrators. Why should the Seminary "delude" young men? By the time they became priests, there would be no duties to perform—in Russia the priests already have nothing to do. . . .

Lithuanian Resistance to the Anti-Religious Drive

798 771 The Lithuanians had suffered much for religion—murder, imprisonment and exile to Siberia—during

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of laymen active in Catholic Action were either murdered or exiled to Siberia. 40,000 Lithuanians were deported to Russia during that one lone year, and at least two-thirds of the number were Catholic Action members.

The Second Russian Occupation

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As far back as 1942, Comrade Vyshynsky, Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs and Liquidator of the Democratic Latvian State, admitted to a foreign statesman that bolshevik tactics in the Baltic States were based on an erroneous policy: the method of violence and compulsion had been a mistake.

In July 1944, the Russians again invaded the Baltic States. However, there was no change in their policy or methods regarding religion: they permitted no Catholic organizations, press or instruction of religion in schools.

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The Salesian monastery at Skirsnemunė was encircled by the Red Army and all physically able friars were drafted into the Red Army.

Soon thereafter, the tactics regarding the clergy wavered. Soviet overlords attempted to maintain, to some extent, the propaganda thesis regarding the alleged existence of "freedom of religion" in the Soviet Union. Only one Catholic Seminary, of the former four, was left in Lithuania, but divinity students, as other university students, were exempt from military duty. The number of divinity students was sharply limited to 150—for a Catholic nation of three million—instead of the previous 850.

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This measure represented a lull in the anti-religious drive: religion was to be eliminated by other means, by mass deportations of the faithful and their replacement by Communist Russians, so that, in the words of comrade Pozdniakov, the priests would find no employment for their vocation, no audience to listen to them. By effecting the primary aim of the Soviet regime—the liquidation of the Lithuanian people—the secondary aim, that of abolishing religion, would be simultaneously achieved. This explains the change in tactics, not the basic aim.

Furthermore, the new "party line" sought not merely to leave the clergy untouched, but to use them for political interests of bolshevism, as is done in Russia with the Orthodox clergy. In 1946 the NKVD encountered great difficulty with armed Lithuanian guerrilla operations. The NKVD decided to use the bishops and clergy to break the fighters' will to wage war. The Ministry of Interior (NKVD-MVD) demanded that the bishops publish pastoral letters and in sermons condemn the armed resistance and urge an end to it.

The alien regime attempted to attain two purposes: to enlist the clergy's aid to further its plans, and to drive a wedge between the clergy and the fighting nation. However, the plan was too obviously underlined with "red" threads, and the bishops declined to do the NKVD bidding. When the NKVD threatened with repressions, one bishop frankly told the satraps: "It is all the same to me whether I live five more years or less—I shall not soil the authority of the Church."

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ing Holy Mass. With his hands tied behind his back, he was pushed into an auto, driven to the railroad station, and placed on board a train.

Bishop Matulionis was arrested in mid-December 1946. The old martyr bore himself with dignity and firmness. To warnings by well-wishers he replied: "I know the bolsheviks." He had ordained some divinity graduates December 9 and 12th, and appeared very weak. He was arrested a few days later for having issued a pastoral letter warning against the wiles of Komsomol.

Arrests of the clergy are more numerous after several visits to "Prime Minister" Gedvila to protest against limiting the number of divinity students to 150. The seminary's building is being requisitioned: its quarters in Marian Fathers' Charity Church are being turned over to Nurses School.

A favorite Russian method is to promote dissension. When Rev. Nagulevičius, pastor of Obeliai, was arrested, the NKDV lodged a suspended priest in the rectory. This "pastor" refused to admit the priest appointed by the bishop. The Chancellor of the diocese arrived to settle the matter, but the NKVD "pastor" refused to obey. When the Chancellor visited comrade Gailevičius, Adviser on Cult Affairs in Vilnius, the latter said: "At present the people rule. This is apparently the people's will, and we cannot help in this matter."

The NKVD is attempting to install its own "priests" and, eventually, to have a Church administration subservient to the NKVD. Thus far, only one apostate is known.

No priests are admitted to the Klaipėda-Memel District.

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Congregations are being evicted from their quarters although, officially, the monasteries are not banned. St. Casimir's Sisters are still in possession at Pažaislis, and the Franciscan Fathers are still left in Kretinga.

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Priests and Church property are heavily taxed. For instance, the Cathedral of Kaunas must pay 46,000 rubles, the Cathedral of Panevėžys 40,000, the small Church of St. Nicholas in Vilnius dating back to the 14th century, is taxed 16,000 rubles. The late Mgr. Jokubauskas, administrator of the Bishopric of Kaunas who died in February 1947, was taxed 20,000 rubles. The figures become significant when it is realized that an average laborer earns 200 rubles a month.

Sidelights of Anti-Religious Drive

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Religious practice is permitted inside the church only: Stalin's constitution grants "freedom of belief" and warrants the liberty of anti-religious propaganda. No religious texts, not even prayerbooks, are permitted to be published—"paper shortage" . . . On the other hand millions of vile pamphlets are printed.

Once more, uniformed sentinels and agents in mufti are ostentatiously posted at church doors. They look over every face and scribble notes in the "blocnotes." Attendance in church means dismissal from a responsible post in the government. Teachers attending religious services are denounced in the press as "persons of low morality." A high school director inquired of

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659 656 798 the Ministry of Education whether he could attend religious services. The reply was: "As an individual—yes, as a State employee—No."

Churches in the cities are crowded. In rural areas—the churches are nearly vacant. This is because people are afraid to leave their homes because of robberies and thefts by the Russians and Party members. On Sundays, even uniformed soldiers and militiamen (police) are openly engaging in robberies.

659 798 208 A vigorous campaign against priests and the Vatican was instituted since December 1946. The Pope, the Vatican, and Christian morality and ways of life are vilely denounced. In 1947, the Vatican became the "cradle of international reaction": the button pressed in Moscow echoes everywhere under the Russian occupation.

Translators immediately put out literature in the Lithuanian language. *Tiesa*, the official organ of the Communist Party and "government," in its #43 issue denounced the institution of Papacy as a partner of imperialists and exploiters: "The Pope was partner of the gangs of Teutonic crusaders," "During World War II, the Pope supported Hitler, the worst enemy of the Lithuanian people," "the clergy are the worst exploiters and enemies of the people."

Christian morality is also abused but "bolshevik morality" (?) is praised. For instance, *Bolševikiniu Keliu* (On the Bolshevik Path, No. 6/12) of 28 February 1947 wrote:

"The working people of a socialist country are creating their own new morality, basically differing from religious morality. Our morality is based on the struggle for Communism. . . . Morality is the means for destroying the exploiting society and uniting the working people around the proletariat which is forming a new Communist society. Hatred for the oppressors and enslavers . . . these are the wonderful peculiarities of our morality."

Certainly, a remarkable resemblance to Nazi "morality". . . .

The people of Lithuania entertain no illusions: the publicity drive against religion presages a new wave of arrests and deportations and purges. Indeed, since February 1947 mass dismissals from State employment —and every concern is a State concern—began.

798 771 883 The Lithuanian people met the second anti-religious drive with passive resistance, just as during the first occupation. The "purges" are met with heroic stoicism. Churches remain filled with the faithful, regardless of the "friendly reminders" by Communist overlords to avoid the "inconveniences" and "hardships." Religious conferences for school children go on in churches, and the Komsomol is boycotted. Anti-religious "lectures" are attended only under compulsion. Teachers support the Komsomol only under direct pressure. *Tiesa*, the Soviet official mouthpiece, voiced its concern (12 February 1947):

"Komsomol meetings in the II Gymnasium of Šiauliai are infrequent. The Komsomol youths' attendance is deficient—a recent meeting was attended by only 5 members out of 13. We asked comrade Baravykaitė,

[Lithuanian Constitution as of April 7, 1948]

[644] Art. 95. Equality of rights of citizens of the Lithuanian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political and other public activity, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 96. In order to ensure the citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Lithuanian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.

Art. 97. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Lithuanian SSR are guaranteed by law:

a) freedom of speech;
b) freedom of press;
c) freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
d) freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

[575] Art. 98. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organizational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Lithuanian SSR are guaranteed the right to unite in public organizations: trade unions, cooperative societies, youth organizations, sport and defence organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically-conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

Art. 99. Citizens of the Lithuanian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 100. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 101. The Lithuanian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for scientific activities, or for struggling for national liberation.

Art. 102. It is the duty of every citizen of the Lithuanian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.